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foreign visitors are concerned, a temporary home may be found them with several of our London friends; and the Hon. Secretaries of the Committee, Mr. Evans Darby and Mr. J. Frederick Green, hope to receive offers of hospitality for our visitors."

The circular will also suggest that the several Societies should invite one or more of their most competent members to prepare papers on the subjects included in the programme of subjects to be discussed at the Congress. As regards this latter, an outline has already been prepared and is now in the hands of the Executive Committee. Later on in the year, the latest date for sending in communications will be announced, as adequate time must be given for selection and classification. Members of Arbitration and Peace Societies, English and Foreign, are invited to send suggestions and to apply for information. Letters should be addressed to the Hon. Secretaries above named at 47, New Broad Street, E. C.

The exact date of the Congress will be announced so soon as the date of meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference has been settled; for it is thought desirable to hold the one immediately before the other, as many Members of Parliament will desire to attend both gatherings.

The United States should be fully and ably represented at this Congress, as well as at the Parliamentary Congress which is to follow. The arrangements for the latter will especially devolve on one Society, the International Arbitration League, of which W. R. Cremer, M. P., is the efficient Secretary. His address is 23 Bedford Street, Strand, London, W. C.

A WORLD'S PEACE CONGRESS AT ROME.

Such is the suggestion of both English and Continental friends of peace. Paris, 1889; London, 1890; Rome, 1891; Washington or Chicago, where the World's Exposition will be located in 1892. Surely such suggestions as the above contain food for thought. Is the world's history moving in a circle? Is civilization coming back to its cradle to start on a new and regenerated life,—the central idea of which shall be the brotherhood of man, and the brotherhood of nations.

PEACE DEPARTMENT OF THE W. C. T. U.

Mrs. Hannah J. Bailey, Superintendent of the Peace Department of the W. C. T. U., kindly sends us her interesting report for the second year of operations. Nineteen States have taken up this department. Two monthly papers, *The Acorn* and *The Pacific Banner*, are issued. Five thousand calendars were sent out at the beginning of the present year, illustrating by contrasted pictures the nature of peace and war. Tracts, leaflets, Bible readings and concert exercises, to the number of 114,000, were circulated. A delegation was sent to the Paris Peace Congress. One thousand documents were circulated and a Peace Banner placed on exhibition at the World's Exposition. Mrs. Mary A. Woodbridge has been secured as a lecturer in this department. She has spoken in nineteen educational institutions and given in all thirty lectures. The work of Sarah W. Collins in New York, Hannah W. Blackburn in Ohio, Mrs. R. M. Jones in Maine is recorded with special interest and commendation.

Mrs. Bailey concludes her admirable report with the confident assurance: "The time is approaching apace when the bloodless fight against national evils now prevailing, shall be rewarded by victory in the name of the Lord, the Prince of Peace."

THE STATE AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, BY DR. MAGEE, BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.

The position taken is expressed in these propositions in the *Fortnightly Review*:

"1. That it is not possible for the State to carry out, in all its relations, literally, all the precepts of Christ, and that a State which attempted this could not exist for a week.

"2. That if it were possible to do this, the result would be a perfectly intolerable tyranny."

The essence of the Bishop's argument in support of his use of these assertions to uphold defensive war, turns on the following principle in regard to the State:

"In whatever form it can exist it is always a trustee. The essential idea of a State is that of sovereignty held on trust for the common weal; and to this trust, for the sake of which it exists, it is morally bound to be unfailingly faithful."

It is well urged, in *Messiah's Kingdom*, that "it can never be a breach of trust on the part of statesmen to obey the law of God, for 'righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.' To squander millions of the country's money upon the freeing of the West Indian slaves would have been a gross breach of duty, if our rulers were simply entrusted with the nation's property; as it was, they were nobly vindicating England's right to be called Christian."

To what authority, it may be asked, does the "moral obligation" look, of which the Bishop speaks, as binding the State to fulfil its trust? Whatever answer a secularist might give to this question, surely a leader of any Christian body must needs admit, that the sanction of all authority is the divine will. As he well argues, it is the spirit rather than the letter of the divine commands that should be sought to be obeyed; and the spirit of our Lord's commands is clearly against all wars. Does not even the Old Testament warn men against the doom of those "nations that forget God"?

It is true that to use force on behalf of the State to compel men to follow fully all the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount would be tyrannical. But so far as the duty of those who represent the State in its government is concerned, their moral obligation is, as truly as that of any others, to "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God." So far as this is not done, it is a failure of duty; that is all. And this failure is not necessary.

We are living under the Government of Almighty God; and one of the fundamental principles of that Government is progress. Accordingly, what may have been relatively right in the past may be absolutely wrong in the future. For we must distinguish between absolute truth, or truth as it exists unconditionally in the infinite mind; and relative truth, or truth as it appears to our finite minds, now under this set of conditions, now under that set.—G. D. Boardman.